

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 DODE-00 H-03 NSC-10 SS-20 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01

EB-11 DRC-01 /160 W

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P R 181846Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7265

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 3874

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR NO XF NATO

SUBJECT: CALL OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESSEL ON NORWEGIAN

PRIME MINISTER

1. SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER BRATTELI REARRANGED HIS VERY BUSY SCHEDULE DURING HIS FIRST DAY IN OFFICE, OCTOBER 17, TO BE ABLE TO RECEIVE ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESSEL FOR A GOOD 40 MINUTE CHAT. STOESSEL BRIEFED BRATTELI ON OUR ONGOING TALKS WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY (EC) AND NATO REGARDING ATLANTIC COOPERATION. HE ALSO EXPLAINED OUR ARMS POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, UNDERLINING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ALLIANCE IMPRESSING ON THE USSR THE NEED TO SHOW RESTRAINT. WHILE BRATTELI HAD LITTLE TO SAY ABOUT THE ATLANTIC DECLARATION, HE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF BURDEN SHARING AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE DECLARATION. HE THOUGHT THAT HE COULD HOLD THE LINE ON DEFENSE SPENDING IN NORWAY BUT SAID IT WOULD NOT BE EASY. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, HE EXPLAINED THAT NORWAY'S REACTION WAS "CONFUSING" SINCE THE ARABS ARE REGARDED BY MANY, SENTI-
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MENTALLY, AS THE "UNDERDOG." BRATTELI NOTED THAT OPINION WAS ALSO DIVIDED IN NORWAY REGARDING THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE. WHILE HE ADMITTED THAT THE STRENGTH OF THE LEFT WAS CAUSE FOR SOME CONCERN, HE SAID HE DID NOT PLAN TO OVER-REACT BEFORE HE HAD

SEEN HOW THE LEFT WOULD BEHAVE. END SUMMARY

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY STOESSEL BEGAN BY BRIEFING THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE STATUS OF DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY, SAYING THAT HIS PURPOSE WAS TO KEEP NORWAY FULLY ABREAST OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS IMPORTANT AREA. ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY (EC) DRAFT DECLARATION, STOESSEL MADE THREE MAIN POINTS: A. WE FIND MUCH THAT IS LAUDABLE IN THE DRAFT, INCLUDING THE FACT THAT IT REPRESENTS A EUROPEAN INITIATIVE; B. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE TRANS-ATLANTIC AND PARTNERSHIP NATURE OF OUR TIES; C. WE DO NOT EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO RESOLVE ALL OF OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE DRAFT IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. CONCERNING THE NATO DECLARATION, STOESSEL EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE FRENCH DRAFT REPRESENTED A WELCOME MAJOR STEP FORWARD IN FRENCH ATTITUDE TOWARD COOPERATION WITHIN NATO. HE ADDED THAT HE AGREED WITH NORWAY'S VIEW THAT THE FRENCH DRAFT PROVIDED A POINT OF DEPARTURE, AND NEEDED EXPANSION IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT AREAS, AND SAID THAT US WOULD FAVOR INCLUSION OF LANGUAGE CONCERNING COOPERATION IN E.G. ECONOMIC AND MONETARY FIELDS. BRATTELI WAS HIS LACONIC SELF AND DID NOT CHOOSE TO COMMENT.

2. ON THE QUESTION OF BURDEN SHARING, HOWEVER, BRATTELI RESPONDED FREELY TO STOESSEL'S DISCUSSION OF US CONCERN AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SOME RESPONSE FROM THE ALLIANCE IN THE LIGHT OF PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL ACTION. (STOESSEL CITED THE PROVISIONS OF THE JACKSON-NUNN AMENDMENT AS AN EXAMPLE OF CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE.) BRATTELI SAID THAT HE WAS IN FULL AGREEMENT WITH THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY THAT THERE MUST BE LANGUAGE IN THE NATO DECLARATION WHICH ADDRESSES THIS QUESTION, AND HE SPOKE GENERALLY OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COUNTRIES ON THE CONTINENT HELPING OUT. HE BEGAN TO HEDGE HIS REMARKS SOMEWHAT, HOWEVER, AS HE DISCUSSED NORWAY'S SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION WITHIN NATO. HE SAID THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT NORWAY WOULD CONTINUE TO PLAY ITS ROLE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. "COMRADE STALIN" WAS NO LONGER AROUND, HOWEVER, AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT FOR NATO AND DEFENSE BUDGETS DURING
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PEACETIME. BRATTELI REFERRED TO HIS PREVIOUS SERVICE ON BOTH DEFENSE AND FINANCE COMMITTEES IN PARLIAMENT, APPARENTLY TO INDICATE THAT HE IS A GOOD JUDGE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE IN THE PRESENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN NORWAY TO OBTAIN IN THE WAY OF DEFENSE FUNDS. WHILE HE WAS NOT PESSIMISTIC ABOUT HOLDING THE LINE ON THE DEFENSE BUDGET, HE ALSO SAID THAT IT WOULD NOT BE EASY.

3. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, STOESSEL DISCUSSED THE SITUATION IN FAIRLY LOW KEY TERMS, STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE WHICH WE PLACE ON MAINTAINING THE MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN THE ARABS AND ISRAEL. HE ALSO TALKED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEING THAT THE SOVIETS LIVE UP TO THEIR SIDE OF THE POLICY

OF DETENTE, ALONG THE LINES OF AMBASSADOR RUMSFWD'S REMARKS IN NATO. BRATTELI RESPONDED BY SUGGESTING THAT THE NORWEGIAN REACTION TO EVENTS IN THE M.E. IS LIKELY TO BE SOMEWHAT CONFUSED. BY TRADITION, THE NORWEGIANS SUPPORT THE UNDERDOG AND THE ARABS RATHER THAN THE ISRAELIS ARE NOW REGARDED AS THE UNDERDOG. YOUTH, IN PARTICULAR, IS PRO-ARAB. HE RECALLED HAVING ONCE TOLD GOLDA MEIR THAT OLDER NORWEGIANS, WHO ASSOCIATE ISRAEL WITH THE LAND OF THE BIBLE, STILL TEND TO BE PRO-ISRAEL--AND HE IMPLIED THAT HE WAS AMONG THEM. I ASKED BRATTELI WHETHER HE EXPECTED THE M.E. ISSUE TO BE RAISED IN THE STORTING; HE REPLIED HE DID NOT RPT NOT.

4. THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD TO SECRETARY KISSINGER PROMPTED A SIMILAR DISCUSSION BY BRATTELI OF SPLIT ATTITUDES IN NORWAY. WHEN STOESSEL TOLD HIM OF THE SECRETARY'S PLEASURE AT BEING SO HONORED, BRATTELI NOTED THAT THE REACTION IN NORWAY HAD BEEN VERY DIVIDED. HE EMPHASISED THAT THE NOBEL COMMITTEE IS AN ENTIRELY INDEPENDENT BODY, THAT HE APPROVED OF ITS INDEPENDENCE AND BELIEVED THAT IT SHOULD BE IMMUNE FROM OUTSIDE PRESSURES.

5. STOESSEL ASKED BRATTELI WHETHER HE THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THE STRENGTHENED LEFT. BRATTELI'S IMMEDIATE RESPONSE WAS ONE OF "SOCIALIST SOLIDARITY" AND HE SAID HE THOUGHT HE WOULD HAVE MORE PROBLEMS WITH THE EXTREME RIGHT. WHILE HE INDICATED THAT THE NEW LEFT WOULD BE A WORRY AND BURDEN FOR HIM, HE DID NOT INTEND TO OVER-REACT AND WOULD NOT MAKE A JUDGMENT ABOUT THE SCALE OF HIS PROBLEM UNTIL HE HAD SEEN

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THE LEFT IN ACTION.

6. BRATTELI IS BY TEMPERAMENT A RESERVED AND RATHER LACONIC GENTLEMAN. IT WAS ACCORDINGLY ENCOURAGING TO SEE HOW HE WARMED UP AS THE CONVERSATION PROGRESSSED. I WAS TOLD THAT HE HAD CANCELLED AN APPOINTMENT IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO CHAT WITH STOESSEL, AND DESPITE HIS BUSY DAY PREPARING HIS POLICY STATEMENT FOR DELIVERY TO THE STORTING TODAY (OCT 18), HE MADE NO EFFORT TO CUT THE MEETING SHORT. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S GENERAL DIRECTOR FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS VIBE SAW STOESSEL OFF AT THE AIRPORT, AND HE TOLD ME THERE HOW MUCH HIS GOVERNMENT HAD APPRECIATED THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S GESTURE IN COMING TO NORWAY IN CONNECTION WITH HIS EC CONSULTATIONS IN COPENHAGEN. FROM THE EMBASSY'S STANDPOINT ALSO, IT WAS A MOST USEFUL AND SUCCESSFUL VISIT. BYRNE

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